

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

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DATES FOR *OVIS CANADENSIS*, *OVIS CERVINA*, AND  
*OVIS MONTANA*.

BY WILFRED H. OSGOOD.

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Since the publication of a former paper on "The Name of the Rocky Mountain Sheep,"\* further data relating to the same subject have been brought to my attention by Dr. Charles W. Richmond. At Doctor Richmond's solicitation, I have arranged this matter for publication and included with it a few additional notes. The previous conclusion that *Ovis canadensis* takes precedence over the two other names published in the same year is not affected except by substantiation.

The facts as they now appear are that *Ovis canadensis* Shaw was published near the first of February, 1804; *Ovis cervina* Desmarest near the first of March, 1804; and *Ovis montana* Schreber near the first of April, 1804.

***Ovis canadensis* Shaw.**

This name was published in the Naturalist's Miscellany, a work of twenty-four volumes issued in monthly parts from August 1, 1789, to July 1, 1813. Each part consists of brief text by George Shaw and a colored plate for each species described. The majority of the plates were executed by Frederick P. Nodder, who seems to have been both publisher and illustrator, but some, as those in Vol. XXIII, were by Richard P. Nodder, while the title page of this volume bears the name E. Nodder. The dates of the parts of the earlier volumes are quite consistently inscribed on the plates showing that the parts were issued regularly on the first of each month in accordance with the plan as announced in the preliminary prospectus.† In later volumes dates do not occur with the same regularity, some volumes having no dates whatever, and this fact has been taken as indication that the regularity was not continued‡ in

\* These Proceedings, XXVI, pp. 57-62, March, 1913.

† See Sherborn, Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., (6), XV, p. 376, 1895.

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spite of other evidence which seems conclusive that it was. This evidence need not be detailed, but it includes the original prospectus, the admitted regularity for the first thirteen volumes, the fact that the scattered dates of the later volumes occur on the parts that would in regular course have been issued on those dates,\* the fact that such scattered dates occur even in the next to the last volume practically at the end of the series,† and the correspondence of the issue of the last part with the date of Doctor Shaw's death which occurred on July 22, 1813. The last volume, therefore, closes with the part for July instead of that for August as otherwise would have been the case. In the face of this evidence of regularity, the mere absence of printed dates even on a large number of the parts has scarcely any weight. The number of plates per part varied from three to four, but, as first noticed by Doctor Richmond, practically every part begins with a bird and thus it is simple to distinguish parts in the bound volumes when they are not otherwise obvious. Knowing the date of beginning and of ending, the number of parts, and the interval between issues, the determination of the date of any particular part is a matter of very simple mathematics and exceedingly conclusive. By this method, *Ovis canadensis*, which is in an undated part, is shown to have appeared in February, 1804,‡ and the presumption that it appeared February first is so strong as to be accepted for practical purposes.

#### **Ovis cervina** Desmarest.

This name was first published in the twenty-fourth and last volume of the "Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle." This volume and the two preceding ones, issued simultaneously, bear the title page date 1804, while volumes I-XXI are dated 1803, although volumes I-III, as appears below, were actually issued in 1802. The series was issued quarterly in "livraisons" of three volumes each and the exact dates of their publication are indicated by regular notices which appeared in the "Journal Typographique."§ The twenty-fourth volume is noticed in the issue for March 7, 1804, and that therefore is the approximate date of the name *Ovis cervina*.

Since they will doubtless be of use in other connections, the notices of the entire series are given, as follows:

\*In the very few cases where there is not absolute agreement, the date on the plate is always earlier, never later, than the contingent date of issue.

†This evidently escaped Doctor Allen, possibly on account of imperfection in the copy of the work examined by him. In the Field Museum copy and the Library of Congress copy, Plate 1004 of Vol. XXIII is dated 1812. In this connection, it may be stated that these copies directly disagree with Doctor Allen's statements in the following particulars: Vol. II, Pls. 44, 62, 69, and 72 are dated; Volume III, Pl. 78 is dated; Vol. IV, Pl. 124 is dated; Vol. V, Pl. 152 is not dated; Vol. XXIII, Pl. 1004 is dated.

‡This coincides with Doctor Allen's conclusion that "careful collation of Shaw and Nodder's work given below shows that the actual date of publication of this name was almost unquestionably February, 1804." (l. c., p. 11.)

§"A weekly journal, published in Paris from 1797 to 1810, devoted exclusively to the announcement of new works, music, etc.; succeeded in 1811 by the 'Journal General de l'Imprimerie et de la Librairie,'" Richmond, *The Auk*, XVI, p. 326, footnote, October, 1899.

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Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle.

Livraison 1. Vols. I-III. 29 pll. 1944 pp.

“La premiere livraison est en vente” \* \* \* “la seconde [livr.] paraîtra sans faute dans trois mois, avec 32 planches.” Journ. typ., VI, p. 74, 15 Frimaire, an 11 (=Dec. 6, 1802).

Livr. 2. Vols. IV-VI. 32 pll.

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Livr. 7. Vols. XIX-XXI. 32 pll.

“Cette entreprise touche a sa fin; sous deux mois paraîtra la derniere Livraison.” Journ. typ., VII, p. 82, 30 Frimaire, an 12 (=Dec. 22, 1803).

Livr. 8. Vols. XXII-XXIV. 45 pll.

Journ. typ., VII, p. 165, 16 Ventose, an 12 (=March 7, 1804).

***Ovis montana* Schreber.**

The first publication of this name is that on Plate 294 D of “Die Sängthiere.” This plate was supplementary to Heft 62 of the great work and, as shown by Sherborn,\* was published in the year 1804. A more exact date is indicated by the following notice under “Neue periodische Schriften” in the *Intelligenzblatt der Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, Jahrg. 1804, No. 152, Col. 1229, Sept. 22, 1804:

“In der vergangenem Ostermesse sind von dem Säugethierwerke des Herrn Präsidenten von Schreber folgende Fortsetzungen erschienen:

- 1) Von der ersten Ausgabe das 62ste Heft, illum. auf holländ. Papier und Schwarz, gr. 4.
- 2) Von der dritten oder monatlichen Ausgabe das 88ste bis 93ste Heft, illuminirt auf holländisch Papier, gr. 4.”

The “Ostermesse,” Buchhandlernermesse, or Easter bookseller's fair, was held in Leipzig during the week following Easter Sunday. In the year 1804, Easter Sunday fell on the first day of April† and the following day, therefore, may be regarded as the actual date of publication of the name *Ovis montana*, approximately one month after the appearance of *Ovis cervina*, and two months later than that of *Ovis canadensis*.

\* Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., p. 587, 1891.

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